Case Study: A stepped approach to health program planning in Planetville, MA

Introduction
Planetville, MA is an urban city of about 80,000 people and a growing population of immigrants and refugees. There are several community-based organizations (CBOs) in Planetville that focus on the health needs of the ethnically diverse groups that live and work there. Kira Lee is a new program planner for a small CBO whose mission is to provide health outreach and education to the community's underserved populations. She works with a predominantly Latino population, most of whom come from the Caribbean. The organization's funds, time and staff capacity are limited. Kira has recently learned about a systematic approach to program planning and wants to use it, though she is unsure about how best to do this.

Step 1: Review Data
Kira has come across a Request for Proposals (RFP) from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to do work on obesity prevention among youth. She believes that obesity is an important issue affecting her community and wants to convince her organization to apply for the grant. As she begins to build her case she asks for your help.

- What kind of data will she need to find to make her case convincing?

Step 2: Finding the right partners

After meeting with her colleagues and looking at the data, Kira made her case that obesity is an important issue to tackle in her community. What's next? She sees that the RFP asks for a list of partners. She knows that other community organizations are probably working on this issue and wants to leverage their expertise. With that in mind, bringing together a number of partners from different arenas may be the most effective way to address this problem. Since she is just beginning the planning process, she may find that she will need to bring in additional partners later to meet all of her needs. At this time, she wants to find partners who will support her RFP and join in the program planning process.

- What partners should she bring to the table and why?

Step 3: Explore potential intervention approaches

Now that Kira is armed with data and local expertise, she can start looking for the types of programs that would be useful to target obesity. For example, she might learn that mass media campaigns will not be helpful in her community, and therefore might look to something else. She will be meeting with her partners and colleagues soon and has been asked to provide a recommendation to the group. Kira wants to use the Community Guide as a resource to help her find the approaches that are appropriate for obesity prevention among youth.

- Given her resources what approaches should she explore in the Community Guide?

Step 4a: Choose the Program

Now that Kira has chosen a relevant approach, she needs to find a few potential programs and then work with her partners to select one. There are a number of obesity prevention programs available, but she wants to choose one that is evidence-based so that she can maximize the chances that her effort will have a significant impact on the young people her organization serves. She also knows that the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation will look favorably upon her application if she uses this kind of program.

- Using her goals and objectives, what criteria would you suggest she use to find appropriate programs?

Step 4b: Kira's Update
After choosing the Bienestar program, Kira and her partners submitted the grant application and were successful! The group must now plan for delivering the program, but the first step will be to decide what the program will look like in their community.

Customize and Localize the Program
Since the group is using an evidence-based program, it is important that the version they deliver is as similar to the original as possible. At the same time, Kira wants to ensure that the program is relevant and has as much impact as possible in her community. She needs to develop an adaptation plan to present to her partners. Kira will need to take into account that her target population is predominantly Caribbean-American and is living in an urban community.

- What would you suggest she customize? Please use Handout 5 to help her decide what adaptations are necessary.
- How would you suggest she test any modifications?

A Summary of Kira's Program Choice: Bienestar
- School-based (K-8) intervention developed to prevent obesity and diabetes in low-income Mexican-American children. Found to improve physical fitness and nutrition.
- Designed to: a) address students' knowledge, beliefs, and behavior; b) alter students' environment; and c) be culturally appropriate for Mexican-Americans.
- Curriculum consists of 50 lessons to be taught over seven months. Also includes activities in the home, school cafeteria, and after-school programs.
- Students set health goals and track their progress toward those goals. Incentives are provided for parents and students.

Step 5: Evaluation Plan

Kira and her partners have customized Bienestar to meet their needs. She will now create a plan to evaluate the success of the program.

For the <u>process evaluation</u>, she wants to keep track of whether or not they are delivering the program as intended.

- What should she track?
- When?

For the <u>outcome evaluation</u>, she wants to find out if the program worked and refers back to her objectives, listed here:

- Increase students' consumption of fruits and vegetables by 1 serving per day in 2 years
- Increase daily physical activity to 3 times / week in after-school programs in 2 years
- Remove sugar-sweetened beverages from the schools in 2 years

- How will she measure outcomes?
- When will she measure outcomes?

Last, Kira wants to create a <u>dissemination plan</u> to share the findings from the evaluations.

- How can she share these findings?
- Who should she share them with?